



# COLORECTAL CANCER ALLIANCE

FEBRUARY 2025

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Colorectal Cancer Alliance Survey was conducted by [Wakefield Research](#) among 1,000 nationally representative U.S. adults ages 18+, between January 24th and January 29th, 2025, using an email invitation and an online survey. Data has been weighted.

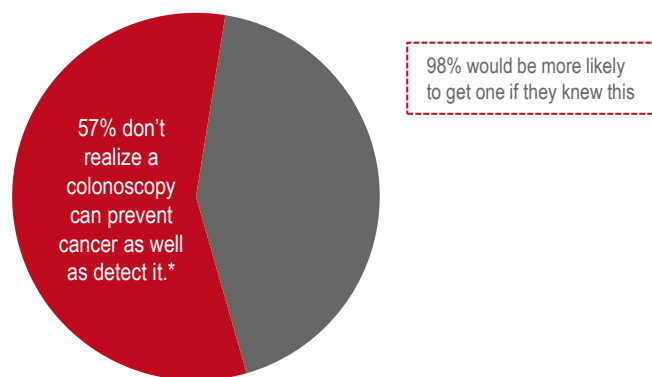
Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

# Majority of Americans Think They Don't Have Time for Colorectal Cancer Screening, As They Prioritize Household Chores

## Survey: 57% Unaware A Colonoscopy Can Prevent Cancer, But 98% More Likely To Undergo One If They Did Know

While getting a colonoscopy is one part of adulting that certainly isn't fun, it is vital for health and wellness. Yet, a surprising number of adults prioritize other things over this important screening. **According to a survey of 1,000 U.S. adults by Wakefield Research on behalf of the Colorectal Cancer Alliance, 51% of adults put chores such as laundry and childcare above getting health screenings like the one for colorectal cancer.** Even though adults know these screenings are important, everyday tasks take precedence, which can be a dangerous decision since colorectal cancer is often silent yet deadly. This is especially the case for parents (60%, compared to 46% of non-parents), who admit that everyday life gets in the way of health screenings.

### LIFE-SAVING KNOWLEDGE



\*ASKED AMONG 1,000 U.S. ADULTS AGES 18+

**Prevention Better Than the Cure.** A surprising 57% don't know that a colonoscopy not only can detect cancer, it can also prevent it by removing polyps. **If they knew that a colonoscopy could prevent colorectal cancer, 98% of Americans would be more likely to sign up!**

**Competing Priorities.** Some adults opt not to get a colorectal screening even after their doctor recommends it. **Among these adults, 72% admit to letting everyday tasks keep them from getting important health screenings like those for colorectal cancer.** The hustle and bustle of life can often cause people to put their own health on the back burner.



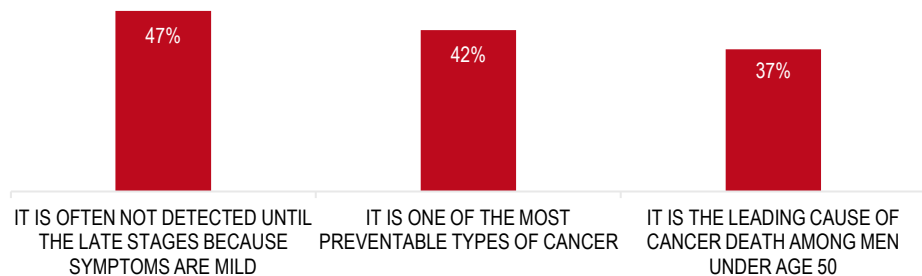
**Fear Factor.** While the benefits of screening may seem obvious, there are some psychological reasons that prevent people from signing up. **Over a third of adults who haven't gotten screened (36%) are simply afraid.** But in reality, it may not be that bad – only 17% of those who have already been screened would let fear about the experience keep them from doing so again.

**Ick Factor.** There's no getting around the fact that colorectal cancer screenings involve some not-so-fun bathroom time. **A squeamish 17% of those who haven't already been screened or made definite plans to do so don't want to get a colorectal cancer screening because they think it's gross.** Women under 45 are particularly sensitive about their bowel habits – 42% wouldn't schedule an appointment right away if they noticed changes like constipation, diarrhea or blood in their stool, or even bring it up at their next appointment.

**Screen Time.** When it comes to the likelihood of getting screened for colorectal cancer, there is room for improvement. Among those already at the magical age of 45 (the age at which colorectal screening should begin, according to the US Preventive Services Task Force), 68% have gotten screened. An even higher percentage of those under 45 and not yet screened – 79% – indicate they'll get screened once they reach 45. **Among all who have not been screened yet, a strong 72% indicate they're likely to do so in the next year, or at age 45 if their age is under the recommended range.** Men under age 45 are the most likely to plan to get screened (86%), compared to 74% of women under age 45.

### POP QUIZ

*Key Facts About Colorectal Cancer That Less Than Half of Adults Recognize as True\**



\* ASKED AMONG 1,000 U.S. ADULTS AGES 18+

**Just the Facts.** Colorectal cancer is very serious and potentially preventable, but not all adults know their facts. **Only 37% recognize that colorectal cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among men under age 50 (it is).** And less than half (42%) know that it's one of the most preventable types of cancer (thanks to colonoscopies!), including just 26% of those under age 45 (compared to 56% of adults 45 and older). Only 21% of women under 45 know this, compared to 32% of men under 45.

**Prime of Life.** Fewer than half of adults (47%) recognize that colorectal cancer is often not detected until the late stages because symptoms are mild (meaning screening before symptoms appear is all the more important!). **A significant 30% of adults under 45 don't think they need a colorectal cancer screening because they're young and healthy.**

## SPOTLIGHT

### What They Don't Know...

Although colorectal cancer is currently the leading cause of cancer death among men under 50 in the U.S., just 36% of men in the below 45 age group recognize this fact.

**More than a quarter of men under age 45 (28%) have already been screened for colorectal cancer, even though recommendations for the test typically begin at age 45.** In addition, 40% of those who haven't already been screened for colorectal cancer indicate they'll definitely get it done once they reach 45. Another 46% will probably get one at age 45.

However, barriers still exist that could keep them from getting screened or screened again. More than a third (36%) could let fear of the test keep them from getting it. Nearly as many (32%) feel the test is too expensive and 27% don't know enough about the screening options. In addition, nearly two-thirds of men under age 45 (65%) are letting everyday tasks like work and laundry keep them from making time for important health screenings like those for colorectal cancer.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Bum Excuses

Getting screened for colorectal cancer isn't a day at the beach, but doing so has real benefits. **Yet amazingly 69% of adults would rather file their taxes than get this important health test!** Women (75%) are even more eager to take the standard deduction than to get this health test.

The reasons people put off getting a colonoscopy are plentiful, and for parents, doing the bowel prep, which can require some serious toilet time, can be a challenge. **Over a quarter of parents (27%) would be all in if someone took care of their kids for them on prep day.** While it's certainly no vacation, it's a great reason to phone a friend so you can do something good for your health!

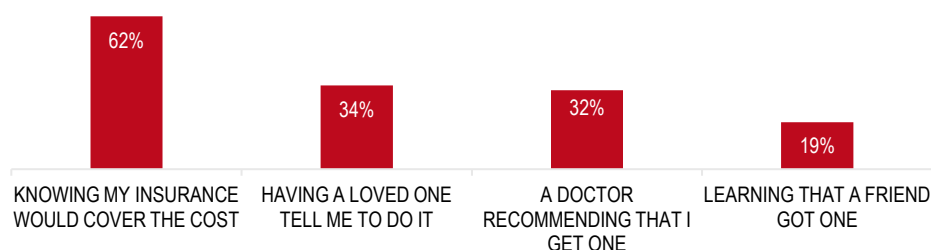
**On the Bright Side.** Another key fact most adults aren't aware of: Adults with average risk should begin screenings at age 45 and repeat every 10 years. **This may be a dose of good news for the 61% who incorrectly believe that you should get one every 5 years starting at age 50.** On the other hand, 25% of those who have already been screened don't believe they'll ever need to do so again.

**Red Flags.** Changes in your bowel habits can be a sign of something serious such as colorectal cancer. **But most people (58%) would not make an appointment with their doctor right away if they noticed constipation, diarrhea, or blood in their stool.** This includes a third (33%) who wouldn't even bring it up at their next appointment.

**Cost Concerns.** The price tag for health screenings can put some people off. **A notable 20% of those not definitely planning to get a screening, or another screening, for colorectal cancer would forgo it due to cost.** But a colonoscopy being covered by insurance would persuade 62% to get one.

### WHAT IT WOULD TAKE

*Factors That Would Convince People to Get a Colonoscopy\**



\* ASKED AMONG 1,000 U.S. ADULTS AGES 18+

**Buddy System.** When it comes to prevention, sometimes a little peer pressure helps. **Learning that a friend got a colonoscopy would convince 19% of adults to get one, too.** Surprisingly, this would be more persuasive for men (24%) than women (15%). And having a friend do the prep with them would make all the difference for 13% of people. Having a loved one tell them to do it would convince 34% of adults to get a colonoscopy, including 39% of those who opted not to get screened even though their doctor recommended it.





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